

Criteria and Instructions to States

2009 Western Wildland Urban Interface Grant Program

Congress has provided increased funding assistance to states through the USDA Forest Service State and Private Forestry programs since 2001. The focus of much of this additional funding was mitigating risk in Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) areas. In the West, the State Fire Assistance (SFA) funding is available and awarded through a competitive process with emphasis on hazard fuel reduction, information and education, and community and homeowner action. This portion of the National Fire Plan was developed to assist interface communities manage the unique hazards they find around them. Long-term solutions to interface challenges require informing and educating people who live in these areas about what they and their local organizations can do to mitigate these hazards.

The 10-Year Comprehensive Strategy focuses on assisting people and communities in the WUI to moderate the threat of catastrophic fire through the four National Fire Plan goals of improving prevention and suppression, reducing hazardous fuels, restoring fire-adapted ecosystems, and promoting community assistance.

Grant Considerations:

- Meets the grant criteria*.
- Meets the 50/50 match requirement**.
- Each grant request will be limited to a maximum of \$300,000.
- No state will receive more than 15% of the funds available in the west.
- At least 25% of all available grant funds must be awarded to new projects.
- All grants will be scored based on the following:

Meets the grant criteria*		Yes = Eligible for scoring		No = Ineligible	
Meets the 50/50 match requirement**		Yes = Eligible for scoring		No = Ineligible	
1	Is this project achievable? (time, goals, budget, etc.)	Yes = 1		No = 0	
2	Is this project measurable? (# of acres treated, # of education/outreach programs, etc.)	Yes = 1		No = 0	
3	Is the applicant clearly showing collaborative elements and partners? (confidence level)	Yes = 1		No = 0	
4	Is this project implemented from an existing community plan or is the request to develop the plan? (Note: preference will be given to those projects that are incorporated in a completed plan)	Completed = 2	In Progress = 1	None = 0	
5	Is the applicant clearly demonstrating project longevity? (Note: preference will be given to those projects clearly showing how it will remain effective over time)	Clearly Defined = 2	Mentioned not defined = 1	None = 0	

*Meeting the Hazard Mitigation Criteria in one or more of the following project category areas:

1) **Fuels:** Recipients may facilitate and implement mitigating fuel treatments in or adjacent to identified fire prone communities to reduce the threat of wildfire to communities. This can be conducted across jurisdictional boundaries, on adjoining private lands, or within respective communities, including all components necessary to plan and implement the project.

2) **Education:** Recipients can provide leadership to coordinate, develop, and distribute wildland urban interface education programs in association with insurance companies, communities, local government agencies, and other partners. Informational and educational programs must target mitigation of risk and prevention of loss. Programs should lead to the use or establishment of one or more fire program elements such as fire safety codes, implementation of Firewise safety practices, fuels treatments within fire prone communities, or community planning to define fire safe actions suited to the local ecosystem.

3) **Planning:** Priority will be given to those activities that tie back to an established community fire plan. Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPP's) are created by local communities and may address issues such as wildfire response, hazard mitigation, community preparedness, structure protection, or a combination of the above. The process of developing these plans can help a community clarify and refine

its priorities for the protection of life, property, and critical infrastructure in the wildland-urban interface. The Healthy Forest Restoration Act (HFRA) minimum requirements for a CWPP are: 1) Collaboration (must be developed with community members, local and state government representatives in collaboration with federal agencies and other interested stakeholders, 2) Prioritized Fuel Reduction (plan must identify and prioritize areas for hazardous fuel reduction treatments and recommend the types and methods of treatment), and 3) Treatment of Structural Ignitability (must recommend measures that homeowners and communities can take to reduce the ignitability of structures throughout the area addressed in the plan). A copy of the CWPP Handbook can be found at <http://www.safnet.org/policyandpress/cwpphandbook.pdf>

Examples of Projects that DO NOT Qualify (not all inclusive):

- Preparedness and suppression capacity building; such as purchase of fire department equipment (try VFA, RFA, DHS and FEMA grant programs)
- Small business start-up funding
- Research and development projects (try Economic Action Program)
- Website, GIS, and database projects
- Infrastructure (building remodel, bridges, road maintenance/infrastructure, water development)

****A 50/50 match.** The allocated grant amount must be matched in full by the recipient using a **non-federal source**. Exception: Title III funds under the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000, PL 106-393 are not considered federal dollars and may be used as match. The matching share can be soft match (which includes training hours valued at an accepted rate, donated labor/equipment, etc) and/or hard match (which is actual dollars spent other than federal grant funds within the specified scope of work.)

The Western States Wildland Urban Interface Grant may be used to apply for financial assistance towards hazardous fuels reduction and educational projects within the following four goals. These project categories may be complementary to one another. Note that these goals are not listed in priority order, and all are equally valued. States are encouraged to identify local needs and submit proposals using one or a combination of these grant focus elements. Needs in any community depend on local fuels, topography, organization, public knowledge of the issues, and the will to address those issues.

Goal #1 – Improve Prevention in the Interface:

Expand outreach and education about wildfire prevention in the interface through the use of programs, such as Firewise, in order to reduce the risks to homes and private property. Homeowners and local governments bear much of the responsibility for improving the defensibility of homes in the interface but may lack the knowledge and information regarding what needs to be done and how to accomplish it. Additionally, they may lack the experience and expertise to deliver educational outreach programs to individuals and communities. States can provide the leadership needed to coordinate, develop and distribute educational materials and the partnering between homeowners, communities, insurance companies and government agencies.

Examples of projects that qualify (not all inclusive):

- Firewise or similar programs
- Living with Fire newspaper inserts
- Fire education components to Project Learning Tree
- Pamphlets, brochures, handouts

Goal #2 – Reduce Hazardous Fuels:

Fuel reduction projects and vegetation treatments have been identified as a means of mitigating wildfire hazards. These are projects that remove or modify fuels in and/or adjacent to WUI development. Effective fuels mitigation treatments can be implemented across jurisdictional boundaries, on adjoining private lands, or within the respective communities. The states can facilitate the required coordination,

collaboration, and partnering of these projects. Projects of this type include fuel breaks, thinning, pruning, landscape modifications, etc. The overall purpose is to modify or break up the fuels in such a way as to lessen catastrophic fire and its threat to public and firefighter safety and damage to property. Project proposals should consider all elements required to implement treatments on the ground, which includes acquiring the necessary permits and consultations needed to complete plans and assessments.

Examples of projects that qualify (not all inclusive):

- Defensible space around homes and structures
- Shaded fuel breaks
- Fuels reduction beyond defensible space
- Removal of slash including piling and burning; mulching; grinding; etc.
- Prescribed fire

Goal #3 – Restore Fire-adapted Ecosystems:

Millions of acres of forest and rangeland face high risks of catastrophic fire due to deteriorating ecosystems health and drought. One way to prevent future large, catastrophic wildfires from threatening communities is by carrying out appropriate treatments (such as prescribed burning or thinning) to restore and rehabilitate forest and grassland health in and adjacent to the WUI. Such treatments have reduced the severity of wildfires, and may have additional desirable outcomes, such as providing sustainable environmental, social and economic benefits. Projects require planning, consultation, design, and sometimes contracting, and may take several years to implement completely. Monitoring and evaluating effectiveness of treatments is usually necessary.

Examples of projects that qualify (not all inclusive):

- Fuels reduction beyond defensible space
- Removal of slash including piling and burning; mulching; grinding; etc.
- Prescribed fire
- Thinning
- Promoting the establishment of native plants

Goal #4 – Promote Community Assistance:

Creating conditions in and around individual structures that will limit the transmission of fire from wildland to structures is basic to reducing the fire hazard in the Interface. This is a responsibility of homeowners and communities. The states can facilitate these actions through safety inspections; demonstration projects; training and education of homeowners, officials and service personnel; fostering fires safe groups; and coordination of projects, services, and supplies.

Examples of projects that qualify (not all inclusive):

- Homeowner-association sponsored fuels reduction projects
- Municipal, fire district, county coordination of slash disposal
- Multi-jurisdictional hazard reduction projects

Application Instructions:

1) All blocks are fill-in enabled and character locked. Applicants must fit all information into the allotted character space. **Applications that have been modified for any reason will be considered ineligible by the review committee. Any attachments or additional documents that are not removed at the state level will not be considered by the review committee.**

2) Application guidelines by box number:

- **Box 1 & 2-** Basic applicant and community at risk information.
- **Box 3 & 4-** The totals in these boxes will add automatically when all data is entered into the fields. It is recommended you check all numbers add up correctly. See description of hard vs. soft match.

- **Box 5-** Answer the specific questions. Check as many boxes as apply to the project. Under the three Project Category fields fill in only if they apply to your project. If, for example, Planning is not a part of your project either leave the question below it blank or fill in N/A.
- **Box 6-** The project area description should give a **brief** overview of the project to point out the hazards and clearly show the need for work in this area. If applying for a fuels reduction project some examples of vegetation types are forest, rangeland, woodlands, etc.
- **Box 7-** The scope of work should explain exactly how the grant dollars will be spent on this project. Unlike the overview, this will provide the specific details of the project. Remember to be concise. Say exactly what will be done with grant funds not what you expect the reviewer wants to hear. Use this block to explain any additional budget detail.
 - *An example of a scope of work is:* A 300 foot wide fuel break 20 miles long will be created around the perimeter of Firesafe Village. A brush masticator will be used where possible and hand crews from the Firesafe Contracting service will complete the work in other areas. Approximately 125 individual lots will be treated using hand crews, creating adequate defensible space around the homes. Grant funds will be used to create and distribute firesafe brochures in this and surrounding subdivisions....
 - The project timeline should include such things as: begin/end dates, milestones, quarterly accomplishments, etc.
- **Box 8-** Describe the contributions each partner will make to the project by stating the collaborating partners name and what they will be contributing to the project such as manpower, equipment, matching funds, etc.
- **Box 9-** Clearly show who, what, when, where and why of how this project will remain effective over time. Include all applicable timeframes, milestones and measurables.
 - *Some examples of clearly defined planned maintenance would be* –delegating a portion of homeowners’ dues to maintain fuel breaks on an annual basis; project sites will be maintained by landowners per signed cost share agreements. Include specific timelines and measurables.

Application Due Dates:

The standard application form for 2009 must be used. This form should be filled out and submitted electronically to the appropriate state agency by their posted deadline.

ATTENTION: Western Wildland Fire Protection Committee (WSFM)

All applications must be received by Diane Denenberg by 4:00 p.m., MDT on **September 19, 2009**. The email address to send the applications to is: ddenen@lamar.colostate.edu. This deadline applies to prioritized applications from the states. Individuals must submit the application to the appropriate state agency for prioritization, they may not submit directly to the address above. The applications will then be posted to the WFLC website for review. When submitting prioritized applications to Diane, name the files by state and priority number (ex. Nevada01, Nevada02, etc...). Also, if possible, submit them in Adobe PDF format.

Each state should set its own internal deadlines for its cooperators, partners, and client’s applications so they may be reviewed and prioritized at the state level before submission to Diane Denenberg by the deadline above. Please remember to remove all additional state specific information you requested and any attachments before posting them to the website.